



St Teresa's Catholic Primary School

www.st-teresas-penwortham.lancs.sch.uk

'Christ be in our heads, in our hearts and in our hands'

Weekly Newsletter

Friday 5th December 2025

Head Teacher Letter

Dear Parents/Carers

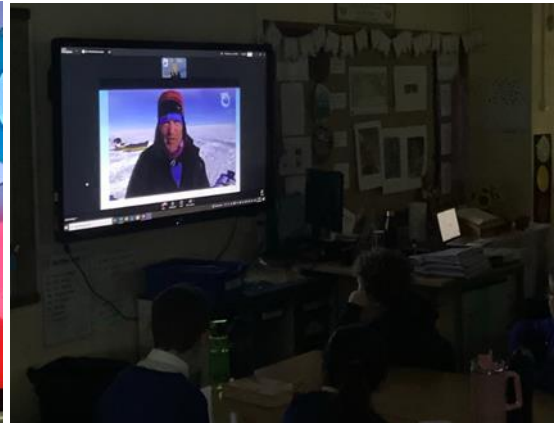
We have had a wonderful week in school. Our Reception pupils delighted everyone with their wonderful performance of The Wiggly Nativity. Their confident narration, enthusiastic singing and wonderful dancing brought the story to life, and it was clear how much effort and excitement they had poured into their rehearsals. We were all incredibly proud of them. Many thanks to the Reception team for all their hard work in preparing the children.

Mr Biggs and our digital leaders had a great day on Wednesday at University Academy 92 (UA92) in Manchester. Whilst there, the children got to use professional recording equipment and experience high-end production and editing techniques in the media suite. Whilst they were there, the children used the equipment to record videos about being digital leaders and how to apply to be digital leaders in the future. It was an incredibly inspiring visit and gave the children an insight into what future prospects and opportunities there are in the world if they continue to develop their passion for technology. We'd like to give a big thank you to Mrs Henley, who helped make this wonderful day possible.



On Thursday, the whole school came together with the parish community and Fr Ian to celebrate Mass, marking the beginning of Advent. The children participated with reverence and joy, helping to set a thoughtful tone for the weeks of preparation ahead.

This morning, our children in KS2 joined in with over 4,200 other schools from around the world for the first ever live assembly from Antarctica and the South Pole and polar explorer Robert Swan. It's been fantastic listening to Rob's experiences, who has visited Antarctica over 40 times. Having studied Shackleton's journey and Antarctica in Year 5 and 6 and our Year 3 and 4 classes focusing on Antarctica for Non-Fiction November this half term, it has been a brilliant way to deepen their understanding of the coldest, driest and windiest continent on Earth.



Thank you to everyone who has already completed the RE and Catholic Life questionnaire. If you haven't had the chance yet, please do so, as your feedback is extremely valuable to us. The questionnaire will close on Monday 8th December.

[Click here for the Parent Questionnaire.](#)

If you are able to attend the meeting on Catholic Life in school on Tuesday 9th December at 9am, please inform the school office. Your presence and support are greatly appreciated.

As we continue through this sacred season of preparation, we come to the Second Sunday of Advent. On Sunday we light the second candle of the Advent wreath, the Candle of Love. It serves as a meaningful reminder of God's enduring love for us and the love we are called to share with one another. Through kindness, generosity and compassion, we can reflect God's love in our daily lives and bring hope and warmth to those around us during this special season.

Jillian Holmes



General News

- ❖ Prayer and Liturgy Theme Next Week: The Preaching of John the Baptist
- ❖ Letters home this week: Foodbank 2025 - Letter from Mrs Smalldon & the Mini Vinnies; Christmas Dinner Booking Reminder; Reminder: 1:30pm Finish Friday 19th December 2025; Y5/6 Dance Competition Rehearsal Last Session Wednesday 3rd December; Important: Y5 & Y6 Independent Travel Procedures - Action Required by Thursday 18th December; Reminder: Y4 Swimming Consent.
- ❖ Primary online admissions are now open.
The deadline for applying for a school place for Primary admissions is **15/1/2026**. Please note that you still need to complete the school supplementary form in addition to the online application. St Teresa's supplementary forms are available from our school office or can be found on our website and need to be returned along with a copy of your child's Baptismal Certificate. www.lancashire.gov.uk/schools
- ❖ Spring 2026 Toast is now available for you to purchase via ScoPay for your child. Deadline for payment is Monday 8th December 2025.

Parking at drop off and pick up

We kindly ask for your cooperation in ensuring the safety of all children and families by adhering to the following guidelines when dropping off or picking up your child:

- ❖ Please do not park on the double yellow lines on Stanley Grove. These restrictions are in place to maintain clear visibility and safe passage for pedestrians, cyclists, and other vehicles. Parking on these lines can create hazards, particularly for our young children.
- ❖ Please do not park on the corners of the road around the school as local residents have complained they cannot get passed, especially when they have strollers.
- ❖ Drive carefully and be mindful of your speed when navigating the area around the school, especially during busy drop-off and pick-up times. There are many children and families crossing the roads, and extra caution is vital to avoid accidents.

Stars of the week

These pupils will receive their awards at the Award Assembly on Friday 12th December at 9.00am.

RM	: T Scholey	3J	: L McKenna
R/1C	: H Salisbury	3/4E	: P Duckworth
1/2V	: M Milton	4A	: E Hills
2B	: E Boulton-Lakeland	5A	: T Johnson
		6I	: E Holden
FS/KS1	St. Teresa's Role Model	KS 2	St. Teresa's Role Model
	E Young		L Wild

Online safety

[Please click here to view the latest Online Safety Newsletter](#)

'POSITIVE APPROACHES TO BEHAVIOUR'

HEALTHY SCREEN HABITS

WHY IT MATTERS

Screens are woven into daily life, but research continues to show that high screen use is linked with increased anxiety, low mood, sleep disruption, and difficulties with attention and self-regulation. Several countries — including Australia, which is now moving toward restricting social media access for under-16s — are responding to growing evidence on the mental health impact of early, intensive screen exposure. When we look at behaviour, emotional wellbeing, and brain development together, it's clear that setting healthy limits is not about punishment; it's about protection.

THE BRAIN, DOPAMINE & ADDICTIVE DESIGN

Many apps and games are intentionally built to keep children engaged: endless scrolling, bright visuals, notifications, and reward loops all trigger dopamine release. Dopamine isn't "bad", but when it spikes repeatedly, it trains the brain to crave more — making it harder for a child to stop, switch tasks, or cope without their device. Understanding this helps adults respond with empathy while still holding boundaries that support emotional regulation and reduce overstimulation.

BOUNDARIES THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Simple routines such as no-screen mealtimes and no devices before bed help to regulate the nervous system, strengthen connection, and improve sleep quality — a key factor in behaviour and emotional resilience. Most guidance recommends avoiding screens under 2, limiting recreational screen time for primary-aged children, and maintaining firm winding-down routines for teens. Supporting safe use also includes antivirus protection, privacy settings, and time-limit features to reduce risk and stress for both child and adult.

BEHAVIOUR & WELLBEING BENEFITS

Healthy screen limits often lead to noticeable improvements: calmer transitions, better focus, more flexible thinking, and fewer emotional outbursts. When a child's brain has regular pockets of rest from digital stimulation, it's easier for them to tolerate frustration, engage socially, and manage the ups and downs of their day. Limits are not about taking something away — they are about giving children the space their nervous system needs to grow.

SAFETY WITHOUT THE SMARTPHONE

Safety matters, especially when children travel to and from school. It's helpful to remember that a child does not need a smartphone to stay safe. Many families choose call-only phones or basic devices without internet access, allowing communication without exposure to apps, social media, or online risks. This small shift can dramatically reduce pressure, comparison, and digital overwhelm while still giving parents peace of mind.

ONLINE RISKS & CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying, exposure to harmful content, and online peer pressure are significant concerns for many young people. These experiences can be deeply distressing and often happen out of adult sight. Maintaining open conversations, keeping screen use in shared spaces, and using age-appropriate platforms can reduce risk. Combining clear limits with emotional support helps children feel safer, more grounded, and more able to tell on adult when something is wrong.

FOR A COPY OF A BITE-SIZE INFORMATION SHEET, 'HEALTHY SCREEN HABITS', COMMENT SCREEN IN THE COMMENTS.

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Recommended Screen Access by Age

These recommendations are based on global child health guidelines and current research. They are not rigid rules; they are starting points to support healthy development.

Under 2

Avoid screens other than video calls with family. The developing brain depends on real-world interaction, movement, and eye contact.

Ages 2–5

Aim for around 1 hour per day of high-quality, adult-guided content. Break screen time into short periods rather than long passive sessions.

Ages 5–11

Aim for balanced use: around 1–2 hours daily of recreational screen time. Prioritise sleep, physical activity, social interaction, and outdoor play before screens.

Ages 11–14

Focus on routines and boundaries rather than strict minutes. Protect sleep by avoiding screens at least one hour before bedtime. Encourage tech-free mealtimes and shared family spaces.

Ages 14–18

Guide young people toward self-regulation: discussing dopamine loops, online safety, body image, cyberbullying, and how screens affect mood and sleep. Maintain clear expectations around routines and night-time boundaries.

If you'd like the full bite-size Healthy Screen Habits Info Sheet to go with today's visual, comment SCREEN below and I'll DM it to you.

The Contented Child

After school clubs

After school clubs finish at 4.20pm. To ensure the safeguarding of all children, parents must wait at the bottom of the steps outside the main school entrance for their child.

Monday Y3 Dodgeball with Prime Sports

Tuesday Mad Science Club

Sports news

KS1 Multi-Skills Event

Four of our KS1 children recently took part in a Multi-skills Competition alongside pupils from 11 other schools.

The event was organised as a carousel of exciting activities, including: racquet and ball skills, bouncing and shooting skills, catching, endurance speed bounce, target games, golf, running and football.

Our superstar team showed fantastic determination, teamwork and enthusiasm and we are thrilled to announce that they came first overall!

A special mention goes to Shavish, who achieved the top score for all boys in the competition.

Huge congratulations to our brilliant team, you made us very proud!



Volleyball Team

A huge well done to our fantastic volleyball team who competed at the volleyball tournament held at Hutton Grammar on Thursday. Out of 8 teams, our children finished an impressive 2nd place, winning 6 games and losing just 1. Their teamwork, communication and determination shone throughout every match. The children represented the school brilliantly and should be incredibly proud of themselves.

Amazing effort from everyone involved — well done, St Teresa's! 🏐✨



PTFA News

🎄 PTFA - "Guess the Name of the Elf" Competition 🧝

The PTFA's festive Guess the Name of the Elf competition is back again this year! Each class will have their own colourful name poster with a list of possible elf names.

- £1 per square
- Posters will be in classrooms from Monday 1st December
- Children can choose a name/square they think belongs to the mystery elf!

To help keep things fair, the first week will be for children who would like to buy one square each. After that, any remaining squares will be available for further purchases until the sheets are full. Filling the sheets is important as each class has a sealed envelope containing their winning name, ready to be opened on draw day!

Our wonderful PTFA team is also preparing super Christmas hamper prizes for each class, which will be arriving in school soon. 🎁

All proceeds go towards supporting school events and activities.

Mini Vinnies

MINI VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Our Mini Vinnies have been thinking about how we can support families who may need a little extra help this Christmas. As the festive season can be a difficult time for many, we are inviting all St Teresa's families to donate one long-dated food item per family to support our local Community Centre. Please send donations into school **before Friday 16th December**.

Suggested Items:

KS1	• Tinned fruit • Tinned Vegetables • Tinned Tomatoes • Rice pudding • Custard • Soup • Beans
KS2	• Crisps • Cereals • Biscuits • Christmas items such as: • Cakes • Mince pies • Chocolates • Puddings

Every contribution makes a difference, and we truly appreciate your support in helping us make Christmas brighter for others.

Dates for the diary

Week 3 lunches w/c 8th December 2025

Monday December	8 th	All Day	Deadline To Consent To Y4 Swimming Via ScoPay
		All Day	Deadline To Pay For 2026 Spring Toast Via ScoPay
Tuesday December	9 th	9:00am	Parent Meeting - Catholic Life, R.E & Prayer
		6:00pm	Y1/2 Christmas Production
Wednesday December	10 th	9:30am	Y1/2 Christmas Production
Thursday December	11 th	7:50am	Young Voices Rehearsal
		8:30am	Y5 Swimming
		9:00am	Y6 St Ignatius (Mrs Hawitt) Stay & Pray
		9:00am	Y2 St Bernadette Stay & Pray
		3:00pm	Reception St Martha Stay & Pray
Friday December	12 th	9:00am	Award Assembly
		3:00pm	Y6 St Ignatius (Miss Wright) Stay & Pray

Schools calendar can be found here:

<https://www.st-teresas-penwortham.lancs.sch.uk/special/google-calendar/>

Community & Parish Information

Weekend Mass Times:

St. Teresa's: 6:00pm (Saturday night) 9:30am (Sunday morning).

St. Mary Magdalen's: 11:00am (Sunday morning).

St. Oswald's: 5:00pm (Saturday night) 8:30am (Sunday morning).

Active Camps Christmas 2025

Our low-cost school holiday club is back for Christmas. We will be offering a fun, safe space for children to take part in exciting games, new activities and festive fun!

Activities will take place at Cuerden Church School and Kingsfold Primary School, on Monday 22nd and Tuesday 23rd December.

To view the timetable and booking links please head to www.southribble.gov.uk/activecamps

Active Camps

South Ribble
Borough Council

Venues:
Cuerden Church Primary School, PR5 6ED
Monday 22nd and Tuesday 23rd December
Kingsfold Primary School, PR1 9HJ
Monday 22nd and Tuesday 23rd December

Halloween Parties, Scooting, Archery, UV Sports, Dodgeball, and so so much more....

Cost per day: £14.00
Cost per block: £28.00

For booking Visit:
southribble.gov.uk/activecamps
Drop off 8.30am - 9am
Pick up 4.30pm - 5pm

Funded places available through HAF

Dodgeball, dance, scooting, cycling, glow sport, soft axe throwing, archery and much more!

All staff enhanced DBS cleared, also safeguarding and first aid trained

All children provided with a healthy lunch

With highly qualified sports

Click here to find out more



January 2026 Timetable

All sessions delivered live online via zoom. 90 minutes long

£24 each or FREE with School Membership

Book online at facefamilyadvice.co.uk

Recordings available for 48 hours (excluding Free Talk)

Autism - Improving Communication	5 Jan 10am
Improving Family Communication	5 Jan 7pm
Supporting A Child with ADHD	6 Jan 10am
Understanding Addictive Behaviour	6 Jan 7pm
Anxiety Based School Avoidance	12 Jan 10am
Understanding Anger	12 Jan 7pm
Supporting Healthy Screen Use	13 Jan 10am
Facing Defiance	13 Jan 7pm
Cannabis and Ketamine Awareness	19 Jan 10am
Anxiety Explained	19 Jan 7pm
Introduction to OCD	20 Jan 10am
What Is ACT	20 Jan 7pm
FREE Responding to Angry Behaviour	22 Jan 7-8pm
Raising Self-Esteem	26 Jan 10am
Decreasing Depression	26 Jan 7pm
Supporting Healthy Sleep	27 Jan 10am
Understanding the Teenage Brain	27 Jan 7pm